

Raising young minds for global impact through biochemistry and molecular biology

Grant recipient: Victor Nweze
Science outreach case study

Supported by the Science Outreach & Communication Grant
Hosted by ASBMB's Science Outreach & Communication Committee



Project overview

Victor Nweze's project presented basic science through symposia and workshops to help build passion for biochemistry among students aged 11 to 19. Over two weeks, he and his team organized three one-day workshops at three schools in the Nsukka communities of Nigeria.

The symposia included keynote speeches, spelling bees and debates. The workshops included wet lab experiments such as DNA extraction from cheek cells, identification of microscopic cells and a comparative enzyme test of saliva on starch using iodine. A session on career paths in biochemistry and molecular biology was included.

Nweze engaged 16 research group volunteers from the University of Nigeria. A collaboration with a local organization, Impact For Success Foundation, contributed to the success of the program.

Aims

- Activate curiosity and wonder in students for basic science principles through problem solving and experiential learning.
- Develop a genuine motivation amongst African youth to pursue a career path in biochemistry and molecular biology.
- Raise a new generation of African molecular biologists for global impact.

Takeaways

- Work with volunteers. They are game-changers because they can make the execution of a program easy.
- Group your volunteers in working groups or committees, such as ones for registration, workshop planning, technical logistics, etc.
- Prepare your outreach resources and make your lab equipment mobile for better ease of transport to different locations.

At a glance

Challenges

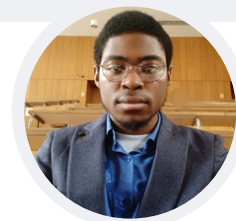
- Restricted access to university laboratory equipment due to worker strike

Achievements

- Reach: 500 students at three schools
 - 55 students: Onward International School
 - 186 students: Shalom Academy Nsukka
 - 259 students: UNN Secondary School
- Enhanced interest. Program surveys indicated:
 - 90% of students enjoyed the program and learned something new.
 - 74% of the participants showed interest in pursuing a career in BMB.

Budget: \$1,000USD (₦773,310 NGN)

Funding was used for workshop and marketing materials, power and A/V equipment, security, safety supplies and awards.



"Considering my passion for science, I hope to start up a nongovernmental scientific organization that will champion the advancement of biological sciences in Africa. I strongly believe that with this I can inspire and train many Africans, as well as create opportunities for them to explore their creativity, curiosity and intuitiveness to make the world a better place."

Victor Nweze, biochemistry research assistant at the University of Nigeria